

Dinner for the Senator

For Katanga's secessionist regime, it was a trifle embarrassing. Here was its stout U.S. supporter, Connecticut Senator Thomas J. Dodd, in town only three days after Katanga President Moise Tshombe was calling on his people to fight the United Nations troops with "poison arrows, spears, axes and picks." To smooth things over, Tshombe and some of his Cabinet ministers mingled pleasantly with U.N. officers at the U.S. consul's cocktail party honoring Democrat Dodd's arrival. But neither Tshombe nor anyone else could control the erratic, excitable Katanga soldiers who had been listening to the President's inflammatory speeches.

Milling Mob. Hardly was the consulate reception over when a group of heavily armed paracommandos of Katanga's "elite corps," on guard at a Katangese general's residence in another part of town, noticed dozens of "suspicious" foreigners arriving at a house a few doors away. This was the home of Mobil Oil's representative, who was giving a dinner party for Dodd, U.N. and diplomatic guests, and the host of Elisabethville society. When a sedan with U.N. license plates drove up, the soldiers were sure some kind of plot was being hatched. Quickly they surrounded the car, shouting and gesticulating wildly at the two startled occupants; Australian-born George Ivan Smith, acting U.N. chief in Katanga, and Brian Urquhart, a Briton transferred to the Congo from U.N. Manhattan headquarters only a few days before.

Breaking through the angry, milling mob, Smith, 46, and Urquhart, 43, ran into the house, where the first guests were already sipping their drinks. The screaming troops were right on their heels; grabbing the hapless pair, they smashed Urquhart's nose, pommeled Smith into submission, then dragged them both toward a truck outside. When a woman official from the Irish Foreign Office tried to intervene, the soldiers cuffed her roughly, bloodying her dress, ordered her to stay out of the fight or die.

Heads Down. It was at this point that a car arrived with U.S. Consul Lewis Hoffacker and Dodd. Sizing up the situation, Hoffacker jumped out, grabbed Smith and hauled him semiconscious into the sedan. "Lie on the floor and keep your heads down!" Hoffacker yelled to Smith and Dodd; then he gunned his motor and drove away at full speed before the confused soldiers could stop him.

But Urquhart was still their prisoner. They hauled him to a military camp outside town, beat him on and off for two more hours. Every time a car approached the camp, the soldiers, fearing the arrival of the U.N.'s tough Gurkha soldiers of the local Indian contingent, put submachine-gun muzzles to Urquhart's head and vowed to shoot if the U.N. tried to intervene. Not until angry U.N. aides induced Tshombe and two of his Cabinet ministers to drive to the camp was Urquhart released. "I was sure I was going to die,"



U.N. TROOPS BRINGING IN SLAIN COMRADE IN KATANGA
Where the wife uses poison arrows.

there," he said after he left the hospital, where he got patchwork on his smashed nose, bruised skull and battered ribs.

In the back. Then, as the evening's excitement died down, the U.N. discovered that two members of an Indian battalion, a private and a major who had gone out in a Jeep in the search for Urquhart, had not returned. Next morning, the private's bloody body, shot in the back at close range, was found in the elephant grass off an Elisabethville side street. But even Tshombe's own investigators could find no trace of the major, who presumably had been carried away for a beating, perhaps death, by some other unit of Katanga's irresponsible army.

As he headed off with Senator Dodd for a sightseeing tour of Katanga's interior, Tshombe blamed all the trouble on "enemies of Katanga [who] timed these incidents trying to show the world that we are no better than the rest of the Congo." But despite Tshombe's professed concern, it was clear that he felt no great sympathy for the Indians. Indeed, he grumbled, the U.N. Indian troops stationed in his area "try to make us feel that we Katangese are in India, rather than the other way about."

The fact was, Tshombe's own incendiary propaganda against the U.N. had probably touched off the trouble in the first place. Back in Manhattan, U.N. acting Secretary-General U Thant angrily rejected Tshombe's claim of a plot against him, called him "a very unstable man." Also unpredictable, U Thant might have added. At week's end, Tshombe hopped a plane bound for, of all places, Brazil, and scheduled to attend, at all times, a Moral Rearmament conference. After he got off his plane at Brazzaville, across the river from Leopoldville, and into a huddle

Youlou of the ex-French Congo. As for U Thant, he was busy putting finishing touches on a new plan for negotiation—and perhaps force—to pull Tshombe and Katanga into line.